



State of New Jersey

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October 6, 2005

TO: Abbott Educators
FROM: Gordon MacInnes
Assistant Commissioner
Division of Abbott Implementation

SUBJECT: *Improving Learning & Literacy in Abbott Classrooms-Guidance Document 2006*

Nothing matters more than the quality of the teaching and learning experience in the classroom. This is why three years ago, the Department directed all Abbott school districts to shift their attention from the implementation of highly specific and prescriptive Court-ordered programs to teaching the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards. And since we know that after grade four, it becomes much more difficult to teach students how to read, we require the focus on early literacy as a priority. The purpose of this guidance is to help Abbott schools and districts to organize evidence to address this priority and other instructional goals for the next two years.

Each school will prepare a Two-Year Report on Instructional Priorities for the years beginning July 2006. This report is to take up where the three-year operational plan leaves off (June 2006) and is due to the district central office by November 1, 2005. The report should be concrete on what the school expects to be doing in the 2006-07 school year in literacy and math, while leaving considerable flexibility for years to follow. Districts, in turn, must use the collective set of priorities and instructional issues from their school reports to serve as a basis for constructing district reports due to the Department on November 15th. The District Report should draw directly on the agreement growing out of the 2005 Face-to-Face conversation.

Abbott schools are making progress with teaching students to the standards they so richly deserve. Our students are proving that they can learn and rise to the occasion when presented the chance – a once in a lifetime opportunity that depends on the dedication and commitment of teaching staffs in every school. Hence, the work that you and your colleagues do everyday constitutes nothing short of students' only chance to become the learned, productive citizens they are capable of becoming and our society desperately needs.

GM/i/Gordon/Guidance 2006/cover memo

c: Commissioner Lucille E. Davey
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Regional Team Leads

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